

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Response in reply to the Office Action mailed on January 22, 2007. Claims 1, 22, 34, 36, 42 to 49, and 52 to 57 have been amended. New Claim 59 has been added. No new matter was added by these amendments or this added claim. Claims 40 and 41 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The Examiner mistakenly rejected Claims 1, 22 and 34 on the ground of nonstatutory double patenting over U.S. Patent No. 6,511,377. Applicants' representative telephoned the Examiner to confirm this rejection was an error. The Examiner confirmed the error and instructed Applicants' representative that he intended to reject Claims 1, 22 and 34 on the ground of nonstatutory double patenting over Claims 1, 13, 22, 31 and 42 of U.S. Patent No. 6,579,179. The Examiner's original intent is corroborated by the listing of U.S. Patent No. 6,579,179 on the PTO-892 accompanying the Office Action. Applicants submit a Terminal Disclaimer herewith in order to overcome this rejection. Please charge Deposit Account No. 02-1818 for the Terminal Disclaimer and any other amounts deemed due.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1 to 58 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Weiss (US 6,511,377). Applicants respectfully disagree with this rejection. However, in order to expedite prosecution, Applicants have made clarifying amendments to Claims 1, 22, 34, 52 and certain dependent claims. Applicants believe these clarifying amendments place these claims and the claims depending therefrom in condition for formal allowance.

Weiss discloses a gaming account system operatively connected to an enrollment station, an information system and a plurality of gaming machines. A player establishes an electronic account at the enrollment station by selecting a personal identification number (PIN), depositing funds into an electronic account and receiving a player card. The player card enables the player to access the gaming account system directly from any gaming machine.

Each gaming machine includes a card reader assembly, as seen in Figs. 2 and 3 of Weiss. The card reader assembly includes a card reader, a keypad and a display. The player inserts their player card into the card reader assembly. The display then

prompts the player to enter their PIN into the keypad. The gaming account system verifies the PIN and the display shows the player an option menu. The option menu includes options which if selected, allow the player to: review their electronic account balance; download a certain amount of funds to the gaming machine from their electronic account; and upload a certain amount of credits from the gaming machine to their electronic account.

The Weiss gaming system includes a redemption apparatus. In one embodiment, the redemption apparatus includes a touch screen interface allowing a player to access their account balance and redeem their balance for cash and/or vouchers with their player card.

The gaming device of amended independent Claim 1 includes a cashout menu selectively displayed by a display device when a player selects an input device, the cashout menu enabling the player to request a payout to the player of a first amount of a certain credit total displayed by the display device in a first form and a transfer of a second amount of the certain credit total to a casino account, wherein the first form is different than the casino account and the first and second amounts are both deducted from the certain credit total.

The first paragraph of page 4 of the Office Action cites Fig. 8 and columns 15 and 16 of Weiss. Fig. 8 of Weiss illustrates some of a player's options at a gaming machine when credits remain on the gaming machine credit meter. As illustrated in Fig. 8, the player may: (a) transfer the credits to their electronic account; (b) remove their card without transferring credits to their electronic account; or (c) abandon their card. Columns 15 and 16 of Weiss address "Normal Withdrawals" from an electronic account performed at an enrollment station (see column 15, lines 35 to 36). Columns 15 and 16 of Weiss also address manual withdrawals, wherein a player receives cash for the value on a gaming machine credit meter from the gaming machine (see column 15, lines 36 to 40).

The Office Action states that Claim 1 does not require that the first amount and second amount be associated with the same credit amount or that the requests be performed at the same time. The Office Action appears to reason that Weiss discloses

the cashout menu of Claim 1 because Fig. 8 discloses a player transferring credits to an electronic account and Column 16 discloses a player receiving cash funds from a gaming machine.

The first amount and the second amount referred to in amended Claim 1 are associated with a certain credit total displayed by the display device. Applicants have made a clarifying amendment to Claim 1, along with other claims, to make this more clear. Amended Claim 1 includes "a first amount of a certain credit total displayed by the display device . . . and a second amount of the certain credit total." Weiss does not disclose a cashout menu enabling a player to request a payout to the player of a first amount of a certain credit total displayed by the display device in a first form and a transfer of a second amount of the certain credit total to a casino account (emphasis added).

The gaming device of amended Claim 22 includes a cashout menu selectively displayed by a display device, the cashout menu enabling a player to request a payout to the player of a first amount of a certain credit total displayed by the display device on a ticket and a transfer of a second amount of the certain credit total to a casino account, wherein the first and second amounts are both deducted from the certain credit total. For the above reasons, Weiss does not anticipate Claim 22.

Amended Claim 34 is directed to a networking system for a plurality of gaming devices, said system comprising: a plurality of gaming devices located at a gaming establishment, each gaming device operating a game upon a wager by a player; a server computer and a communications link linking the server computer to the plurality of gaming devices; and a fund transfer account program stored by a memory device, said program executable by the server computer to for at least one of said gaming devices: (a) cause said gaming device to selectively display a cashout menu; (b) enable the player to transfer a first amount of a certain credit total displayed by said gaming device to a casino account using said cashout menu; and (c) enable the player to request a payout of a second amount of the certain credit total in a selectable form using said cashout menu, wherein the first amount may be retrieved at a later time and

the first and second amounts are deducted from the certain credit total. For the above reasons, Weiss does not anticipate Claim 34.

The method of amended Claim 52 includes the steps of: (a) enabling a player to request a cashout of an amount of a certain displayed credit total including a first portion of the certain displayed credit total in a first form and a second portion of the certain displayed credit total in a transfer to a casino account, wherein the first form is different than the casino account and both the first portion and the second portion are deducted from the certain displayed credit total; (b) transferring the first portion of the certain displayed credit total to the player in the first form; and (c) during the same cashout, transferring the second portion of the certain displayed credit total to the casino account (emphasis added). For the above reasons, Weiss does not disclose this method.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 1, 22, 34, 52 and the claims depending therefrom are not anticipated by Weiss and stand in condition for formal allowance.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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